Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Radio Service
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT Monday, August 15, 1938

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "CHEESE." Facts from the Federal Food and Drug Administration, United States Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

"My heart leaps up when I behold" -- a salad crisp and green and cold.

Fellow-homemakers, again I must admit that the poetry is not mine. It comes to us through the courtesy of Mr. William Wordsworth and our Washington correspondent with the Food and Drug Administration.

Last week her subject was "Salad Dressings," and how they are protected from adulteration and misbranding by Federal law. Today her subject is not "salads," as you might expect, but different varieties of cheese -- also protected from adulteration and misbranding by the Federal law. It's true, she does mention a cheese salad, at the end of her report, and she tells us where we can get a collection of cottage-cheese recipes -- including a few salads. I've already sent for the recipes myself.

But now to work -- to learn our lesson. Don't be discouraged when you hear there are four or five hundred different kinds of cheese, all told. For if you haven't time to become an authority on cheese -- to visit all the cheese countries -- you can still become a semi-authority by learning something about the distinct varieties of cheese, of which there are only about eighteen. These eighteen varieties are different in flavor and in texture -- according to the way the cheese is made, and according to the "molds" or other organisms used to "ripen" it.

So here goes -- for our first cheese lesson: "In America, nowadays, our principal cheese is really the English style cheddar, which got its name from the village of Cheddar in Somersetshire, England, where it was made long ago.

"Cheddar cheese is made from sweet milk, usually whole milk. If skimmed or partly skimmed milk is used, the cheese must be so labeled. Cheddar usually comes from the factory in round flat shapes, called 'Daisies,' which weigh 20 pounds; 'Young America,' weighing 8 to 12 pounds; 'Long Horn,' weighing 12 pounds; and 'Squares,' which weigh 10 pounds. From these the grocer slices off the pound, half pound, or quarter his customers order. Cheddar cheese is also sold in cans -- 12-ounce and 5-pound cans. The green cheese is packed in the can to ripen normally, without rind or waste.

"Another popular whole milk cheese is Limburger, originally made in Belgium, now manufactured extensively in the United States. The curd is ripened in a damp atmosphere by special fermentation. In the dry substance, Limburger contains not less than 50 percent of milk fat, and is usually uncolored. The characteristic strong odor results from forced fermentation, and development of volatile fatty acids. Limburger cheese is generally sold in bricks of one or two pounds, wrapped in paper and tinfoil.

"As soon as you open the tinfoil," says our correspondent, "you are greeted by the unforgettable odor of Limburger cheese. Here's how the odor is developed. Limburger is cured in small blocks of about two pounds, on damp shelves, in damp cellars. The surface of the cheese is kept moist, and every day, for about two weeks, the cheese-makers rub or massage the Limburger. By the end of the two weeks, this daily massage has helped develop some of the chracteristic odor. The rest develops after the cheese has been wrapped in tinfoil.

"Another whole-milk cheese we Americans are very fond of is Roquefort. The French Roquefort is made from sheep's milk, and ripened in the damp limestone caverns of Southern France. You can recognize the fully-ripened Roquefort by its mottled or marbled appearance. The curd is inoculated by sprinkling with bread crumbs on which a special mold has been developed. The cheeses permit the mold to grow. The outside of the cheese is salted, scraped, and brushed at intervals to retard development of the mold on the outside. Curing takes from one to five months.

"I have described three whole-milk cheeses," says our correspondent, "Cheddar, Limburger, and Roquefort. Still other popular whole-milk cheeses are Pineapple cheese, formed into a shape resembling a pineapple; Brick cheese; Stilton, which contains the same mold as Roquefort; Gouda, with the saffron-colored rind; Neufchatel; Cream cheese; and Gorgonzola, which, like Stilton, contains the same mold as Roquefort.

"Popular cheeses made of whole milk or partly skimmed milk include Edam, Camembert, Bric, Parmesan, and Swiss cheese. A great deal of Swiss cheese is made in this country, especially in Ohio and Southern Wisconsin.

"I would tell you much more about all the cheeses I've mentioned," continues our correspondent, "and I could mention a good many more, if you had nothing to do but listen to the fascinating story of cheese. But every report must come to an end, and in concluding this one I want to remind consumers of these facts:

"First, when buying cheese, if you are looking for the imported product, remember that the original package must carry the name of the country from which it came. Second, the labels on cheese manufactured in other countries, but repacked for sale in the United States, usually state the name of the cheese, and in addition, carry the word 'Imported.' Third, practically all American-made European varieties of cheese bear qualifying words such as 'American' or 'Domestic', and usually the name of the State in which the cheese was made. And last, remember that a cheese customarily made from whole milk -- a Cheddar, for example -- will be plainly labeled 'Made from Partly Skimmed Milk,' or 'Skimmed Milk,' if such is a fact." That's all of today's report -- except this postscript:

"P.S. If any of your listeners want some good recipes for cottage cheese -- salads, sandwiches, Old Dutch cheese cake, cottage-cheese pie, a cottage-cheese roll that doesn't have to be cooked, cottage-cheese nut loaf, and others, they can get these recipes from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Tell them to ask for Farmers' Bulletin 1451, 'Making and Using Cottage Cheese in the Home.'"

All right, homemakers -- if cottage cheese is your dish -- you know where to get the recipes -- Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

****